

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, October 20, 1970

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (11:10 a.m.)

PRIVILEGE

MR. WOOLLIAMS—WAR MEASURES ACT MOTION—
STATEMENT BY MEMBER FOR GREENWOOD ON
VOTE OF CERTAIN MEMBERS

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege affecting all members of the House of Commons and in particular those members who took a strong position that the government should have brought in and should bring in a special bill to cover a special situation, namely, the crisis created by the FLQ in the province of Quebec and indeed elsewhere. This morning's *Globe and Mail* contains the following statement under the heading "War Act Supported 190-16":

"they have swallowed their own convictions because of fear of political consequence," Andrew Brewin (NDP Greenwood) said.

"We know the stand we were going to take was an unpopular stand—but do you abandon your principles because of that?"

This statement is reported to have been made by the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin). The statement is false and implies wrong motives. It reflects on the voting position of many Members of Parliament and particularly on the position taken by many members of the opposition, including my leader, in reference to this serious situation. We voted in accordance with our principles for what we considered to be a solution, for unity and I hope for the good of Canada. We asked for a special bill for a specific purpose. When that request was accepted I considered, like many other hon. members, that the principles we had enunciated had been effectively assured. I personally voted accordingly and in accordance with my conscience, as indeed I am sure other members did, with the sincere hope that the course followed would promote justice and unity. I am sure all members followed the same course.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has given the Chair the notice required by the Standing Orders. The Chair spent some time reflecting on the very important and serious matter raised by the hon. member. I would take from his statement that he took the opportunity of raising the question of privilege to restate what he considers are the correct facts in relation to the vote taken yesterday. I assume that the hon. member does not wish at this time to press the matter further. There is no suggestion of a motion being submitted to the House. In the circumstances, the matter will not be considered further by the

House, and no ruling will be made whether there is or is not a prima facie case of privilege.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

TABLING OF EXTRACTS OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF
COMMISSIONERS OF INTERNAL ECONOMY, FEBRUARY 9,
MAY 5 AND JUNE 23, 1970

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to lay before the House extracts from the minutes of meetings of the Commissioners of Internal Economy of the House of Commons held on February 9, May 5 and June 23, 1970.

ADJOURNMENT FOR FUNERAL OF PIERRE LAPORTE

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, in view of the funeral of the late Mr. Laporte, I should like to suggest to the House that we might make arrangements to adjourn the House for the afternoon to provide an opportunity for hon. members to attend the services either in Montreal or in Ottawa. This would mean we would rise at one o'clock and return to the House at eight o'clock, with the understanding that this day be regarded as one of the appointed days for the debate on the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: It is so ordered.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

INTRODUCTION OF PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS—
STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: As hon. members know, it has been the practice at the outset of the past several sessions to give, by unanimous consent, first reading in a group to the numerous public bills standing for introduction by private members and thereby allow such bills to proceed to the second reading stage with a caveat to the effect that every bill would be examined by the Chair before it was proposed for second reading in order to ensure that each bill met the requirements of the rules and practices of the House. The reason for such a procedure is of course the great number of bills which have been received and which, on this occasion, has reached an all-time record. Time did not afford an opportunity to examine the bills in detail.